

Calling all 'student ambassadors'

Aiming to raise interest and promote better understanding of Hong Kong among students at universities across Japan, the annual Hong Kong Cup speech contest has been revamped this year into a presentation contest to select "student ambassadors" who will serve as a bridge between Hong Kong and Japan.

The Hong Kong Cup All Japan University Student Ambassadors English Programme 2014-2015 is now accepting applications, open to all university students in Japan including graduate students — except for those from a country or territory where English is an official language.

The four winners will be invited to Hong Kong for a two-week familiarization and study tour as student ambassadors. They will also have internship opportunities at one of the Hong Kong-related organizations in Japan or at The Japan News for up to two weeks.

Four winners from last year, including Nao Shoji who took first place, recently shared their memories of the Hong Kong study trip and offered advice to entrants this year.

At last year's contest, Shoji, then a sophomore at Keio University, discussed her first stay in Hong Kong that summer under the title "Hong Kong: A Home for Everyone." She concluded the city has potential as a home for everyone because "numerous ethnicities coincide with each other to create a harmony."

Shoji said she usually does not get stage fright, but she was nervous at the contest because the other contestants who spoke before her delivered their speeches wonderfully.

"However, I managed not to forget my lines and just expressed what I felt. This contest helped to build my confidence," she said.

The first runner-up, Iskander Akybayev of Kazakhstan, was participating in the contest for the second time in a row. "The contest provided vital lessons on how to deal with pressure, boosted my confidence and gave me the ability to feel the audience. As well, it is a great opportunity to make a rich network of people from diverse backgrounds," he said.

Akybayev said that he tried to train approximately 10 times a day for three weeks before the contest. He suggests to watch public speaking video samples on the Internet and think about how you would perform if you were the person in the video.

The second runner-up, Kyoko Takigawa, said she was impressed by the opinions and thoughts each finalist had. "I learned from the contest the importance of expressing your own opinions when necessary," she added.

Experience 'real Hong Kong'

The four top finishers were invited in March to a two-week Hong Kong tour, which they said was an enjoyable experience and a great opportunity to get to know the city and make friends there.

The tour included 10 days' study and accommodation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, as well as visits to the Legislative Council, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and other places.

Akybayev said he still remembered a quote from martial arts legend Bruce Lee that he came across at the museum: "Be like water."

"It implies flexibility, but that you shouldn't change your nature," he said. "We should be flexible and conscious of the differences we

have, but we should not change our nature or core."

Takigawa said, "The food was good, the people were nice and above all, Hong Kong has such a diverse mix of cultures."

Concerning the experience at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shunsuke Minemura, who won the Fighting Spirit Prize, said he was surprised and pleased to learn that more students majored in Japanese studies at the university than he expected.

The prize is awarded to a finalist who puts forward the best performance following the top three winners and has less than one year of overseas experience.

Shoji said she was surprised with how many friends she made in Hong Kong, and that she still keeps in touch with some of them.

"I highly recommend this contest to every student who is interested in Hong Kong because it gives you the opportunity both to challenge yourself and to experience the true Hong Kong," she added.



The Yomiuri Shimbun
The four 2013 contest winners pose at the Legislative Council — From left, Shunsuke Minemura, Kyoko Takigawa, Nao Shoji and Iskander Akybayev.

Unique chance to experience Hong Kong

By Sally Wong
Principal Hong Kong Economic and Trade Representative (Tokyo)

Hong Kong and Japan have enjoyed a very close and friendly relationship for many years, as reflected in our huge bilateral trade volume, large number of tourists, and our keen interest in each other's culture and cuisine.



(HKETO) is organizing the "Hong Kong Cup All Japan University Student Ambassadors English Programme" to encourage university

students in Japan to explore the dynamism and rich diversity of Hong Kong.

Since 2007, we have organized the Hong Kong Cup English Speech Contest almost every year with great success. To advance this to a further stage, we have decided to change the format to an English presentation contest based on five specific themes on Hong Kong.

The four winners will become student ambassadors of Hong Kong. Apart from being awarded a trip to Hong Kong for a familiarization visit and a 10-day study tour at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the winners will also be offered the opportunity to do internships at organizations related to Hong Kong in Japan or The Japan News, and be invited to join our various events held in Japan. The student ambassadors will have a unique opportunity of experiencing and enjoying the many exciting facets of life in Hong Kong and the vibrancy and

cosmopolitan nature of the city, from enjoying the food and culture of Hong Kong to gaining some insight in university life in Hong Kong, making friends with our energetic young people and getting a glimpse of what it is like working in an organization related to Hong Kong.

The contest is organized by HKETO in collaboration with The Japan News and with the support of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our commercial sponsors — Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd. and Dah Chong Hong (Japan) Ltd. — for their generous sponsorships.

The program offers an excellent opportunity for university students in Japan to enhance their English language and presentation skills, confidence in public speaking, to explore foreign culture and make new friends in Hong Kong.



The Yomiuri Shimbun
Last year's champion, Nao Shoji, delivers her speech at the 2013 contest on Dec. 14.

香港杯全日本大学 学生大使 英語プログラム 2014-2015

Hong Kong Cup All Japan University Student Ambassadors English Programme 2014-2015

香港と日本の懸け橋となる 学生大使募集

香港と日本の懸け橋となる学生大使を選出するプログラムです。学生大使の役割は日本の大学生の間で香港への関心を高め、香港と日本の相互理解を促進することです。最終審査会で4人の学生大使を選抜し、2週間の香港研修へ派遣するほか、希望者には日本にある香港関連機関またはジャパン・ニュースで、最長2週間のインターンシップの機会を提供します。また香港経済貿易代表部が主催する各種イベントにも招待します。奮ってご応募ください。

2013香港杯 全日本大学英語スピーチコンテスト
2013 Hong Kong Cup All Japan University Students English Speech Contest

主催: 香港特別行政区政府 駐東京経済貿易代表部
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募集期間: 9月9日(火)～11月17日(月)
予備審査結果発表: 12月8日(月) 予定
最終審査会: 1月10日(土) 大手町・KDDIホール
問い合わせ: 03-3216-7795 (平日9:30～17:30)
hongkongcup@yomiuri.com

次のテーマから1つ選び、パワーポイントを使って6分間の英語発表をしてください。

- ・香港の素晴らしいあなたの家族や友人にPRしてください。
- ・日本人の香港留学、就職、起業を増やす方法を提案してください。
- ・香港であなたが起業する場合のビジネスプランを考えてください。
- ・クールジャパンと香港のポップカルチャーとのコラボレーションを提案してください。
- ・SNSを使って日本の若者の香港旅行を増やすアイデアを考えてください。

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